

Strategies used by Heads of Secondary Schools in Managing Students' Discipline for Academic Achievement in Ilemela District, Mwanza, Tanzania

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Abstract

The strategy to maintain student discipline in secondary school is a crucial which guide students for future self-sustainability and the right to learn since a well-disciplined student learn without any distraction. The study examined the strategies used by heads of secondary schools in managing indiscipline problems for students' academic achievement in Ilemela District in Mwanza Region, Tanzania. The study used convergent parallel mixed research design and applied assertive discipline theory. Data were collected from 113 respondents using questionnaires and interview guide. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistic with the help of the SPSS Version 20, IBM, USA. The study revealed that the strategies used to curb the indiscipline cases include the use of guidance and counseling, cooperation between teachers and parents, provision of positive and negative rewards, and rules and regulations have to be enacted. The study recommended that teachers should have good relationship with both parents and students, parents should play their parenting roles effectively.

Keywords— Academic Achievement, Indiscipline cases, Management, Strategies.

I. INTRODUCTION

The provision of quality education is the crucial goal of any education system and this goal can never be achieved without management of school discipline. Discipline in school is a very important aspect towards achieving quality education; while lack of it usually gives rise a lot of problems such as poor time management, irregular attendance, discipline is the ability to carry out reasonable instructions to reach appropriate standards of behavior without fore. It is the conceptual quality in a human being which is associated by a person's ability to do things well at the right time, in the right situation, without or with minimum supervision (Ngonyani, 2002). For several years now there have been concerns by various people and groups regarding the deterioration of the quality education in secondary schools. The origin of disciplinary problems differs from one school of thought to another. This is because from the beginning every society had its own culture and norms that have to be followed by the

members of the society. Norms and culture differed from one society to another and children learned from the elders and those who were found in different offences were punished by the society's leaders.

The punishment given depends on the offence she or he has committed. Okumbe, (1998) asserts that some societies use capital punishment to enforce their norms and values on the young generation. Moreover Morison et al. (2004) assert that instruction in informal education takes place in fire places where the family members gather to discuss family matters when a person has committed an offence. In Tanzania, the ultimate purpose of any educational system is to provide high-quality education and training. Without proper management and administrative apparatus, this goal would be impossible to achieve. Currently, education and training are managed by education ministries, parastatal organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with various legislation empowering ministries and institutions to carry out education and training

responsibilities in accordance with the Education Act No. 25 of 1978 (URT, 1995). The Education Act No. 25, of 1978, legalizes corporal punishment in the United Republic of Tanzania as a disciplinary measure in penal institutions. Government guidelines in 2000 through regulation stipulated by the ministry decreased the total number of strokes from 6 to 4. The ministry stated that only school heads have the mandate to implement punishment on students who commit serious offences. But indiscipline cases are still increasing, which might need quick intervention and prevention (URT, 1995).

The studies show that some students' results of the National Form Examinations in Tanzania are still not so good, while others complete their form four studies without competence skills. Despite numerous studies that have been carried out such as those by Malekela (2000), Galabawa (2000), Mosha (2000) and Omari (1995) that look for factors associated with academic achievement in schools, very little has been investigated on the strategies used in handling discipline related problems on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools. A study into school discipline is very important that would focus on the strategies used by heads of schools in handling indiscipline related problems can be identified as one of the factors for its existence or absence in secondary school the issue of discipline has become a matter of concern to many educational stakeholders today as the indiscipline cases are occurring daily in secondary schools There is a need to address the issue of strategies employed by heads of schools on handling indiscipline related problems in schools if the students are to meet the academic achievement.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The school-culture has central influence in prevention and fight against violence in schools. They focus on the school as a whole and develop learning- and school-culture especially the teacher-pupil-relationships for reinforcement of social competences is most important strategy (Stein and Steenkamp, 2016). Semali and Vumilia (2018) revealed that expulsion and corporal punishment of pupils have been used to control incidents of indiscipline in secondary school. Moreover, Anayo (2014) revealed that punishments, reword warnings, and explaining clearly the school rules can correct the indiscipline cases of students. Education stakeholders need to collaborate in creating a good environment for study. Ways to manage discipline cases are counseling and guidance, punishment, and cooperation among school management (Ngalya, 2017). This implies that administrators must have a cooperative discussion on how to guide the students through

counseling and enforce rules and regulations as ways to improve students' discipline in secondary schools.

Precious. (2018) pointed out that, when punishment increases, there is a decline in the performance of students, which creates a room for chaos like the destruction of property. It was therefore concluded that to decrease discipline cases, there must be rules and regulations, counseling and guidance, all having the same discipline code that can assist parents and students. This implies that severe punishment does not create a room for the students to behave well; instead, it creates hatred between teachers and students. Establishing rules and regulations as well as parent-teacher relationships might help in reducing or addressing the discipline problems in secondary schools. Student leaders play an important role in maintaining student discipline. This implies that discipline problems can be managed through students' leadership. It is important for the school leaders to formulate a students' government so as to manage different aspects of school discipline (Remedy, 2018). Ofuyuru and Okema, (2011) conducted research in Gulu district of Uganda revealed that rewards, punishment, communication, guidance, and counseling are the ways to deal with school discipline issues. They suggested that management be simplified, that all tactics be balanced, and that researchers should go deeper into each strategy for controlling student discipline.

Ward, (2007) discovered that, it is common for secondary school pupils to break laws and regulations, show disrespect for administrators, trash school property, and physically assault teachers. This suggests that the consequences of those indiscipline activities may result in poor academic achievement among kids. Stein (2016) suggested that the strategies used in German as conflict management strategies is to integrate pupils in organizing the school day and lead to better and conflict-free cooperation among the school community. The school clubs where girls and boys meet at the afternoon discussing their conflicts involved among them. Slavin, (2009) found that strategies that have being used to prevent violent disorder in schools is the school authority information where they can get help if there is any dangerous indiscipline cases. Prevention of violence is part of school-development in which school-culture has central influence in prevention and fight against violence in schools (Stein 2016).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mixed research approach was used in this study which included qualitative and quantitative approaches. The approach allowed collecting a wide range of data in order to develop a deeper and clear understanding of the

problem. Convergent parallel design applied to allow students better understanding of the study problem by obtaining additional data. Sweeney (2016) argued that the advantage of employing convergent parallel is to help the researcher find dataset convergence, divergence and contradiction. Furthermore, the research employed a convergent parallel research design to map the findings about the techniques used by school leaders in dealing with indiscipline cases and quantitative data in order to provide a full analysis of the research problem. The participants in this study were heads of schools, teachers, students and board members. This study involved a sample size of 113 respondents, whereby four (4) heads of schools, four (4) discipline teachers, four (4) board members, One (1) DEO, 20 teachers and 80 students. A simple random method was utilized to choose 80 students.

The researcher employed purposive sampling to select heads of school and discipline masters and board members. Convenience sampling was chosen to acquire secondary school teachers in order to obtain fundamental data about the study without the hassles of utilizing a randomized sample, and it also allowed respondents to answer with ease. The research questions were administered to teachers and students and interview method was employed with school leaders, school board members and their discipline masters. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20, IBM, USA was used to analyze quantitative data. Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic analysis.

The Findings of the Study

The findings are presented in a way that they allow a logical flow of ideas as governed by the study objective.

Strategies that have been used by Heads of Schools to Address Students Discipline

The researcher was interested to find out the strategies which have been used by heads of schools to handle the indiscipline cases. Strategies used by the head of schools to solve indiscipline cases include establishment of guidance and counseling, good cooperation between teachers and students, parents and religion classes have to be provided. Establishment of rules and regulations includes physical work as punishment (corporal punishment) to manage indiscipline cases. The findings are presented in the table 1 below;

Table 1. Strategies used by Head of School to Address Students' Indiscipline

	Frequency	Percentage
to solve problems	2	10
Physical work for punishing students	10	50
Guidance and counseling	44	20
Cooperation between teachers and students	1	5.0
Corporal punishment	1	5.0

Suspension

10% of respondents reported that suspension have being used by heads of schools as the way of eliminating indiscipline students cases. This is supported by Emily Boudreau (2019) that if a student is suspended from the school they are no longer causing disruptions, and removing disruptive students could have a positive impact on those who remain in the classroom. This implies that students who show indiscipline actions have to be removed from school which helps other students to stop copying their fellows' behavior.

Through an interview with school board member explained that:

"We suspend students who engage in indiscipline cases so that to abolish the bad behavior and make other students fear being punished negatively and the situation become normal at school. Generally, students who engage in indiscipline cases have to be removed from school so as to make the situation better at school" (Interviewee, 2021).

Stein, (2016) insist that according to the categories as applied in handling disciplinary action in a school is reflection that instead of giving student suspension should be allowed to reflects him or herself, this can be done for few day, such as coming late to school or being disruptive in class, a teacher could ask children to think about their misbehaviors. The proposed types of discipline measures in this category which are used by head of schools including; verbal warning which mean talk to the student and tell him or her that what they did was wrong, Imposing a time-out which involves asking children to either leave the class or sit in a quiet place for 10 minutes to think about their behavior, order to be released to clear what they did wrong and how they will avoid repeating the same mistake which should be done firmly, but without humiliating the student.

Total Exclusion from School

The findings from (table 1) show that 10% of respondents reported that students who engage in indiscipline cases have to be removed from school. This is supported by Kiwale (2017) that the way of managing indiscipline cases

is to exclude indiscipline students from school permanently. Board members in a school are the ones to make sure that there is a right for a student to be excluded from school (URT, 2019). This implies that students who engage in indiscipline cases can be excluded from school permanently through board members suggestion in cooperation with teachers. The board member revealed that indiscipline students are given suspension to stay out of school for almost six months. Those who do not attend school for a long time, at least 90 days have to be excluded from school permanently (Participant Z, October 2021).

“For the case of pregnant, the participant revealed that, students who get pregnant at school have to be excluded from school permanently which could help other students fear engaging in love affairs. Students who engage in drug abuse have to be excluded from school because if those students are left at school, they may convince other students to use drug and destroy the school’s image” (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that students who engage in indiscipline cases which can destroy the school's image have to be excluded permanently from school.

Physical Work

The data (Table 1) shows that 50% of respondents reported that physical work is the way to reduce indiscipline cases in secondary schools. This is supported by Aillet, (2021), who revealed that benefits of physical activities for students include better focus in school. When the brain activates following physical work, it can better concentrate and help improve memory and information retrieval. Physical work, improves school attendance and academic performance since it activate student's brain and causes them to concentrate more on learning process.

Through interview, participants reported that:

“Physical work reduces absenteeism at school and students enjoy physical work while they are at school, build confidence by finding the skills to do the activities and become more creative. Physical work is important to students as it reduces the number of absenteeism cases. Students concentrate much more on the learning process rather than engaging in indiscipline cases” (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that teachers and heads of schools have to create a room for giving physical work to students who

engage in indiscipline cases. This helps them to stay at school, enjoy the activities while they are continuing with their studies.

Moreover, another participant said that;

“In order to eliminate the cases of indiscipline in secondary school, teachers and parents have to build good cooperation, rules and regulations, and the action to be taken by making sure that students are well understood. A good relationship between teachers and students has to be established, and a religion period should be emphasized. Conducive learning and teaching environment has to be created and the room for guidance and counseling has to be established” (Interviewee, 2021).

Steenkamp (2016) support that students’ prior knowledge of rules and regulations is very important before taking any action which should be done during orientation or induction course. The students should also be well informed about rules and consequences of breaking them. Omari (2006) argue that indiscipline is often caused by ignorance of the rules and inability to adhere to multiple and conflicting rules that frustrate intelligent individuals. When school rules and regulations are not fair and clear to teachers and students it is simple to be broken.

Guidance and Counseling

About 20% of students reported an audience, indicating that counseling is a good technique to reduce indiscipline in secondary school which is in line with Njoki (2008) that situations of indiscipline in secondary school can be resolved by school-based supervision and counseling. Nalanda and Nalanda (2019) revealed that students should be given proper guidance on how to deal with psychological problems, advised on how to cope with various situations that they face, and shapes their behavior by teaching how-to live-in peace and harmony with others. This means that secondary school supervision and counseling are required to shape pupils’ conduct.

Through an interview, participant states that;

“Guidance and counseling are important at school and help the students to change their negative attitude towards school aim. If guidance and counseling are done on property at school, indiscipline cases may be reduced. Guidance and counseling are the only ways of solving indiscipline cases peacefully. Heads of schools should have experts in guidance

and counseling at their schools, but unfortunately, in secondary schools they chose only a teacher to do guidance and counseling” (Interviewee, 2021).

In addition, participant explained that;

“To manage guidance and counseling, the government has to make sure that there is a person with professional training in guidance and counseling because not every person can handle the level of professionalism needed in guidance and counseling” (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that every school should have a person who has a profession in guidance and counseling. By applying guidance and counseling properly in a given school, indiscipline cases may be reduced. This is due to the fact that guidance and counseling are the only good ways of solving indiscipline cases peacefully. Heads of schools should have experts in guidance and counseling at their schools, but unfortunately, in secondary schools they choose only a teacher to do guidance and counseling.

Establishment of Cooperation between Teachers and Students

Findings shows that 5% of the respondents reported that cooperation between teachers and students can curb indiscipline cases in secondary school. This is supported by Sabrina (2018), that cooperation in the learning process provides a safety net. It develops higher levels of thinking to students while improving social and interpersonal skills. Students learn how to work with various types of learners and develop their leadership skills. This implies that cooperation between teachers and students is more important as students can bring useful information to teachers regarding dangerous behavior practiced by students at school.

Through the interview, participant explained that

“When teachers cooperate with students, indiscipline cases are reduced. Students can reveal the bad behavior of their fellow students to teachers; this happen only if the cooperation is strong. Otherwise, students make secretes with their fellow students who engage in indiscipline cases” (Interviewee, 2021).

Moreover:

“Cooperation between teachers, students, and parents has to be established. When teachers cooperate with parents, unwanted behavior can be reported by

the parents or the people from the community. Teachers have to establish a good relationship with the community so that they can be able to get useful information regarding the students and school in general” (Interviewee, 2021).

In addition to that, participant reported that:

“Students feel better when they see that they are considered important at school. Teachers have to treat students as human beings. Although they are still young, they have feelings like other human beings. Teachers have to stop using harsh language on them and create friendship with them” (Interviewee, 2021).

Furthermore, the DEO quoted saying that;

“In order to eliminate the indiscipline cases in secondary school, teachers and parents have to build good cooperation, rules and regulations have to be created, a good relationship between teachers and students has to be established, a religion period has to be established, teachers have to be committed, a conducive teaching and learning environment has to be created, teaching and learning materials have to be available, and in every secondary school, a person with a profession in guidance and counseling must be present” (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that to manage indiscipline cases, teachers and heads of school have to be committed to every aspect of the organization. Okumbe (1998), community, teachers and student’s relationship is a processing device through which the educational system meets the aspirations of the society. The strong relationship between a school and the community, according to Mosha (2006:206), therefore, adheres to the principle of transparency and thus tries to maintain good discipline and order in the school.

Corporal Punishment

The results show that 5% of the respondents reported that corporal punishment is the way to solve indiscipline cases in secondary school. This is supported by stein (2016) that corporal punishment is important in solving indiscipline cases as it is cheap and easy to administer. This implies that corporal punishment is the easiest way of punishing students when they commit offenses. The students

experience pain which make other students to learn and escape from committing indiscipline cases.

Through an interview, participants explained that:

“Corporal punishment is important at school because enhance students to be obedient. Through corporal punishment, parents put their children under control. Students take their studies seriously. When students are not punished through corporal punishment they forget even to do their homework, but corporal punishment makes those award-winning and active participants in the lesson. Corporal punishment is important in secondary school because it makes students active in every aspect of school life when they are at school. Teachers and heads of schools have to use corporal punishment in a good manner to avoid harming students”.

The result implies that punishment has to be given to wrong-doers which include corporal punishment. It is important in secondary school because it makes students active in every aspect when they are at school. Teachers and heads of school have to use corporal punishment in a good manner to avoid harming students. Parents have to provide basic needs for their children, school rules and regulations have to be suspended, and cooperation between students and teachers has to be established. Also, the students suggested that in order to manage indiscipline cases in secondary school, a relationship between teachers, students and parents has to be established. This will assist the teacher and parents in controlling student indiscipline.

IV. CONCLUSION

Strategies like suspension, total exclusion from school, physical work, guidance and counseling, establishment of cooperation between teachers and students, corporal punishment, good relationships between teachers and parents and conducive teaching and learning environment are the strategies which can be used to curb indiscipline cases in secondary schools. The study is well connected with other researchers on indiscipline cases in which to manage indiscipline cases guidance and counseling, cooperation among school management, enforcing rules and regulations should be used. Also punishment, good communication ability, and counseling decrease indiscipline cases.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that there must be rules and regulations, guiding and counseling to ensure equal discipline code, which assist parents and students. Also, teachers and head of school have to enhance cooperation to avoid indiscipline cases from occurring. Board members have to encourage parents to control their children. Students and teachers have to cooperate in creating school rules and regulations. Parents must play an active role in parenting and providing timely needs to their children's. Guidance and counseling have to be provided at school to control teenagers. Parents should stop engaging their children in business instead of studying. Also, Good relationship between teachers, parents and students has to be established.

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